BESSIE SCHWARZ

Cloud to Street

Co-Founded with Elizabeth Tellman

2016 Climate Fellow

BIG BOLD IDEA

Increase climate resilience for communities at greatest risk for flooding by delivering flood-risk maps created from global satellite imagery, social media intelligence, and cloud-computing.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Cloud To Street dynamically identifies the 100-year floodplain for any community around the world within seconds and predicts who is most likely to be affected by it. Combining machine learning, satellite imagery, crowd-sourced science, citizen engagement, and new data platforms like the Google Earth Engine, Cloud To Street conducts faster, cheaper, and more integrated vulnerability assessments for flood-prone areas. Already running in the United States, Senegal, and India with support from the World Bank, the organization's assessments are developed in collaboration with those at risk on the ground. This people-centered approach transforms technical information into an equitable force for change and actionable climate resilience.

PERSONAL BIO

Bessie Schwarz is co-founder, president, and lead social scientist at Cloud To Street. A community organizer by training and at heart, Bessie believes deeply in the power of collective action. However, she entered academia to explore data-driven ways to empower people and leverage science to create new solutions. In graduate school, she and her best friend began coding a dynamic socio-physical flood-risk tool to provide information to those who need it most. Still hiding out in academia, she is today the chief strategist at the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, where she helps design and translate public opinion and behavioral science research into tools for advocacy groups, governments, businesses, and anyone else engaging the public around climate change. Bessie holds a BA in philosophy and environmental science and technology from Carleton College and an MS from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Science. Her opinions and research have been featured by the New York Times, The Hill, VICE, and CNN, among other media outlets.

Organization/Fellow Location

Brooklyn, United States

Impact Location

North America

United States

Organization Structure

For-profit

VISIT WEBSITE ↗